

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04  
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AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 1669

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PE  
SUBJECT: NATIONAL PROTEST STRIKE FEB 27-28

REF: (A) LIMA 1464, (B) LIMA 0559, (C) LIMA 0516

SUMMARY: THE NATIONAL STRIKE CALLED BY THE MOSCOW-LINE PERUVIAN LABOR CONFEDERATION (CGTP) SEEMS ALMOST CERTAIN TO TAKE PLACE FEB 27-28. THE ULTRA LEFT CUL WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY CALLED FOR SEPARATE STRIKE MARCH 2-3 WILL JOIN THE FEB 27-28 CGTP PROTEST INSTEAD. THE STRIKE CENTERS ON THE ISSUE OF REHIRING FROM 3,000 TO 5,000 UNION LEADERS FIRED FOR LAST YEAR'S STRIKE ACTIVITIES. IT DOES NOT REPEAT NOT SEEM LIKELY THAT THE STRIKE HAS LARGE RANK AND FILE SUPPORT BUT FEAR OF DAMAGE TO PERSONS OR PROPERTY MAY CAUSE WIDESPREAD ABSENTEEISM AND THUS GIVE THE STRIKE A DEGREE OF SUCCESS. THE CENTRAL QUESTION FOR THE STRIKE IMPACT IN THE LIMA-CALLAO AREA IS THE PARTICIPATION OF THE TRANSPORTATION WORKERS WHO WILL MEET THE AFTERNOON OF FEB 24 TO TAKE FINAL DECISION. GOP APPEARS SPLIT INTERNALLY AND STILL UNCLEAR HOW HARD IT WILL CRACK DOWN OVER WEEKEND TO MITIGATE STRIKE ACTIVITIES. END SUMMARY.  
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1. ALTHOUGH CGTP AND CUL HAD EARLIER ANNOUNCED SEPARATE GENERAL STRIKES FOR FEB 27-28 AND MARCH 2-3 RESPECTIVELY, THE CUL NOW APPARENTLY IS JOINING THE CGTP FOR A SINGLE FEB 27-28 EFFORT. THIS APPEARED IN THE DAILY PRESS FEB 23 AND LEAFLETS ARE BEING HANDED OUT IN THE STREETS ANNOUNCING THE JOINT STRIKE. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF LAST

MINUTE CHANGE AND GENERAL BLACKOUT OF STRIKE INFORMATION IN GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED MEDIA, THERE STILL MAY BE SOME CONFUSION WITHIN VARIOUS STRIKE SUPPORTING GROUPS.

2. AS REPORTED EARLIER (REF A), STRIKE ISSUE IS REHIRING OF 3,000 -- 5,000 WORKERS (DESPEDIDOS) FIRED DURING LAST YEAR'S STRIKES. THE COMMUNIST DOMINATED CGTP HAD INSISTED WHEN IT CALLED OFF THE JAN 23-24 STRIKE (REF B) THAT THE STRIKE WAS ONLY BEING POSTPONED PENDING A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO THE FIRED WORKERS ISSUE. DESPITE SEVERAL SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS BETWEEN CGTP AND MINISTRIES OF LABOR AND INTERIOR, THIS ISSUE HAS REMAINED AT AN IMPASSE. WITHIN THE CABINET THE MORE CONSERVATIVE MILITARY LEADERS REPORTED REJECTED "LABOR AMNESTY" OUT OF HAND.

3. ON FEB 22 THE APRA RELATED CTP AND THE APRA PARTY, THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF LABOR LAWYER JOSMELL MUNOZ, OFFERED A PLAN TO THE MINISTER OF LABOR, JOSE GARCIA CALDERON, TO RESOLVE THE DESPEDIDO QUESTION. THE GOP WOULD ISSUE A DECREE GRANTING A SPECIAL DISABILITY PENSION TO THE FIRED WORKERS, WHICH WOULD AMOUNT TO SOMETHING SIMILAR TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE. THE CTP SAYS THE IDEA OF INTRODUCING THIS KIND OF A SOCIAL WELFARE IDEA INTO LABOR LEGISLATION AS A LONG-TERM PROJECT IS ATTRACTIVE FROM A UNION POINT OF VIEW AND APRA THINKS THAT SOME SOLUTION OTHER THAN MORE ARRESTS AND MORE PROTESTS MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL

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FOUND FOR THE CURRENT CRISIS.

4. THE MOST RECENT REPORTED DEVELOPMENT WE HEARD ABOUT LATE TODAY, FEB 23, WAS OF A HEATED DISCUSSION DURING THE AFTERNOON FEB 23 BY THE JUNTA (COMPRISED OF PRIME MINISTER/ MINISTER OF WAR MOLINA AND THE MINISTERS OF THE NAVY AND THE AIR FORCE, BUT NOT REPEAT NOT PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ) OVER LABOR AMNESTY THAT RESULTED IN A CALL FOR "CRACKING HEADS" OF COMMUNIST LEADERS AND RENEWED TALK OF TOO SOFT A LINE BY THE GOVERNMENT. WE WILL SEEK FURTHER CLARIFICATION ON THIS TOMORROW.

5. GOP SECURITY OFFICIALS (PIP) HAVE INFORMED EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER THAT THEY THINK THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THE STRIKE WILL RESULT IN A PARTIAL PARALYSIS OF LIMA ACTIVITY. THEY BASE THIS ESTIMATE ON THE GENERAL FEAR OF PERUVIANS OF VIOLENCE AND THE LIKELIHOOD THAT PARTICULARLY THE ULTRA-LEFT WILL PROVOKE VIOLENT INCIDENTS DURING THE MONDAY-TUESDAY STRIKE ALTHOUGH THEY, AS MOST OTHER OBSERVERS, DOUBT THAT THE STRIKE EFFORT HAS MUCH RANK AND FILE SUPPORT. PIP THINKS THAT THE BANKWORKERS, THE BEERWORKERS OF LIMA AND SOME WORKERS IN SMALL INDUSTRIES IN

THE INDUSTRIAL ZONE OF LIMA AND CALLAO WILL PROBABLY SUPPORT THE STRIKE. THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, SUFFERING MASSIVE UNEMPLOYMENT, ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL APPEAR IN THE STREETS IN PROTEST. HOWEVER, THE DEGREE OF SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE CGTP EFFORT HINGES ON THE DECISION OF THE TRANSPORTATION WORKERS WHO WILL HOLD A GENERAL ASSEMBLY FEB 24 AT 3:30 PM. THE CGTP LEADERSHIP WILL HAVE A SEPARATE MEETING TOMORROW AFTERNOON TO FINALIZE PLANS AND ORGANIZE AND COORDINATE STRIKE ACTIVITIES.

6. ACCORDING TO SOUTHERN PERU COPPER CORPORATION INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS OFFICIALS, THE PEKING-LINE MINeworkERS FEDERATION ONCE AGAIN WILL NOT REPEAT NOT COORDINATE ITS STRIKE PLANS WITH CGTP. SPCC REPORTS NO STRIKE ACTIVITIES IN THE UNORGANIZED MINE AT CUAJONE, AN ANTI-STRIKE VOTE AT ILO, AND CONFIDENTIAL

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THE LIKELIHOOD OF A SIMILAR DECISION AT THE TOQUEPALA SPCC COMPLEX.

7. COMMENT: IT NOW APPEARS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT A GENERAL STRIKE WILL TAKE PLACE FEB 27-28. THE APRA INSPIRED COMPROMISE (PARA 3) HAS COME VERY LATE AND IN ANY EVENT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE INSUFFICIENT FOR CGTP LEADERSHIP TO CALL OFF STRIKE. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THIS OFFER BY THE GOP, HOWEVER, COULD SOW FURTHER CONFUSION IN CGTP RANK AND FILE AND WEAKEN STRIKE EFFECTIVENESS. IMPACT OF STRIKE UNCERTAIN, PENDING DECISION BY TRANSPORT WORKERS TOMORROW. HOWEVER, IN ANY EVENT THERE IS LIKELIHOOD OF SCATTERED DISRUPTION AND INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE, PARTICULARLY GIVEN FRUSTRATION OF ULTRA LEFTISTS WITH CGTP LEADERSHIP. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS AS KEY UNION AND GOP POSITIONS EVOLVE.  
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